



Romans

Right With God

Hello Romans

Lesson Two

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

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Hello Romans

Today, we study the very first words in Paul's letter to the church at Rome. (*Read the first verse of Romans: 1:1*) In writing letters today, we typically begin with our own address, a date and then "Dear Whoever." In the ancient times, the letter writers began with their name, the name of the person they were writing and a greeting. There was also a brief prayer to whatever God the writer served. One typical prayer was, "May the gods preserve you." A surviving greeting (not from the Bible) reads, "Serenus to his beloved sister Isidora, many greetings. Before all else I pray for your health..." Paul follows this pattern in his letters.

He calls himself "a servant of Christ Jesus." The word servant meant slave...a very strong word referring to being totally controlled by a slave master. As he and other Christians of that era used "servant," the meaning was *belonging to Christ without reservation*.*

In the Law of Moses, a person who got himself in debt and could not pay, became the property of whoever loaned him the money. He became that person's slave. By law, at the end of 7 years, he was set free. However, sometimes the slave was aware of the difficulties that got him into the position of slavery...his inability to keep himself out of debt in the rugged country and the economy of the day. In that case, finding himself well-fed and well-housed, he chose to remain in the slave relationship with their master. The law provided that in such cases, the slave could go to his owner and be granted a permanent slave status. Along with his master, he would go to the Tabernacle; the priest would lead the slave to the doorpost, punch a hole in his earlobe and proclaim him to be a bond slave. Most often, the hole in the earlobe told the character of the master...that of kindness and good provision.

Paul says that he is a "servant of Christ Jesus." Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word *Messiah*, so Paul is saying that he serves the Messiah, Jesus. Remember that Jesus preferred "the Son of Man" as an identity. We should note here that Paul was Jewish and Christ or Messiah would have very special meaning to him as well as to his Jewish readers. They, the Jews, were always looking for the Messiah promised to them in the Old Testament.

He proceeds to say that he is "called to be an apostle." Paul sees himself in a long line of persons who have been spoken to by God and responded. He is called, but he is also sent. His calling is to be an apostle...a messenger or one who is sent. The apostles were concerned with establishing and caring for churches. Paul says that he is "set apart for the Gospel of God." We normally think of set apart as being separated from something. Here, and in other writings he uses it to mean set apart for, or separated to, something. Here he says that he is set apart for the Gospel of God.

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Paul always uses the term “Gospel” to mean the good news of Jesus...or good news of God’s Son. We often refer to the “Gospels,” meaning Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In these books of the New Testament, we find the story of Jesus’ coming to earth, which was very good news to all who believe in Him. For Paul, and for us, there is no better news in all the world than what God has done in Jesus for our salvation. Here we can take Gospel to mean, preaching the Gospel, being a “Gospel man” or “Gospel woman” and living the Gospel. Paul’s calling was to be a preacher, but also to commit himself to the Gospel way of life. The Gospel is based on God’s eternal purpose and His determination to save His people.

Finally, we have already spoken to the great importance Paul placed on God in this letter. Everything Paul touches in this letter, he relates to God. In this very first verse he makes it very clear that this Gospel is the good news of God.

Scripture Memory: “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God.” Romans 1:1

*Underlined statements in this Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

For the Teacher:

Lesson Goal: To assist the student in understanding who Paul is and what is the purpose of his life.

1. The word “servant,” as Paul used it, was applied to Abraham (Genesis 26:24), Moses (Joshua 1:2), Amos (Isaiah 20:3; Amos 3:7). The prophets spoke of themselves as slaves to God, Paul calls himself a slave to Christ. He, thus, places Jesus in the highest place in his life.
2. Paul uses the word Christ (Messiah) 379 times out of the full New Testament use of 529 times. He uses it 65 times in Romans alone.
3. Paul emphasizes in other places the importance of the response to the call as completing the call...he uses the term, “effectual call.” Paul insisted that he was as much an apostle as the original twelve and that his calling was as an apostle to the Gentiles. (II Corinthians 11:3; 12:12)
4. The words, “set apart” are not uncommon. Paul and Barnabas were “set apart” for missionary work. (Acts 13:2) Interestingly, the root word is the same as used by the Pharisees when they referred to themselves as “separated ones.” Paul would certainly have viewed himself in this light, claiming that he was a Pharisee in regard to the law, and a Hebrew of the Hebrews. (Philippians 3:4-6)
5. “Gospel” is definitely a Pauline word. He uses it 60 times out of the 76 times it is used in the New Testament. Paul found great joy in proclaiming the Gospel. His most famous statement about the Gospel comes a little later in the letter to the Romans: Romans 1:16

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Student Worksheet

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=Paul calls himself “a _____ of Christ Jesus.” The word servant meant _____...a very strong word referring to being totally controlled by a slave master. As he and other Christians of that era used “servant,” the meaning was _____ *to Christ without reservation.*

=Christ is the Greek word for the Hebrew word _____.

=His calling is to be an apostle...a messenger or one who is _____. The apostles were concerned with establishing and caring for _____.

=Paul always uses the term “Gospel” to mean the _____ of Jesus...or good news of God’s _____.

=Here we can take Gospel to mean, preaching the _____, being a “_____ man” or “_____ woman” and living the Gospel. Paul’s calling was to be a preacher, but also to commit himself to the _____ way of life

Scripture Memory: “Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God.” Romans 1:1

A Roman Road to Salvation:

Romans 3:23 “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

Romans 6:23a “For the wages of sin is death.” The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, and that payment is death.

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us.” God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

Romans 6:23b “But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” The debt for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, paid that debt and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

Romans 1:9, 10 “That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that “God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead” is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, “Jesus is Lord,” as a statement of faith. Believing “with your heart” means that you believe with your mind and with all that you are.

Romans 10:13 “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God’s child and have eternal life.

Romans 12:1, 2 “I urge you brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.” Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.